



MINUTES - FRIENDS OF WHITE OAK

NOVEMBER 11, 2020 at 7pm - ONLINE MEETING

Zoom link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88963170930>

PRESENT: Barry, Brian, Bruce, Ken, Elisse, Dave, Fatmata, June, Rachael, Rob, Shane, Shana, and Pete (Staff). Chris and Kim were necessarily absent.

- 1) Welcome
 - a. Elisse kicked off
- 2) Minutes from September 15, 2020 were approved via Email and noted by Elisse.
- 3) Discussion – Thrive Montgomery 2050 with Khalid Afzal, Montgomery County Planning Department
 - a. Board received a copy of the presentation ahead of time. Khalid gave an update. Upcoming hearing Planning Board on November 19 and Planning Board will give staff guidance. Goes to County Council in March of 2021. Equity is a priority with Thrive as well as Housing affordability. Planning Board thought the initial draft was too detailed and so they gave direction to incorporate flexibility for progress and future changes. COVID-19 is playing a role in outcome, but staff is on schedule for the most part.
 - b. Khalid requested we begin recording the meeting and consensus from the FOWO was given.
 - c. Dave asked about the shifting of urban to suburban and the market? Khalid noted most people claim they will not return to cities. Too early to figure it out, but yes things will change. Social level for sure. Transportation will change drastically such as more automation. How we work will also change – more remotely. Public meetings are up in attendance. Home deliveries have increased too.
 - d. Barry asked about the commercial real estate market. Surplus commercial space into residential space. Khalid agreed that tools to help places through the change are important. Schools may also be targets for conversion to residential living space. The County's Climate Action Plan strives to bring emission levels by 2025 to zero.
 - e. Rob asked about the relationship between the SSP and the General Plan? General plan is 30,000-foot view, where we want to be. SSP will now be called the Growth Infrastructure Plan and it lays out planning for the next 5-6 years. The relationship between the two: all master plans become offshoots of the General Plan. Master Plans are considered amendments to the General Plan.

- f. Dave asked about Agricultural Reserve and the County's food system? Khalid responded with the attributes of the AG Reserve. All growth should be transit oriented. Areas like Germantown and other Upcounty areas have a need for transportation choices.
- g. Rachael noted ECAB meeting, Casey Anderson noted that Route 29 should be included in the General Plan. Khalid touched on the moratorium in East County at the time. How do we bring investments to areas in need? Equal distribution of resources is crucial to fix equity issues. Gated communities cause imbalance and are not good for community. Need more diverse housing, people of color change the diversity of the community and how do you do this when everything in the west is developed? On the other hand, the East County must attract new people.
- h. Ken asked about jobs for the East County and people being able to live and work in proximity. Khalid noted the WOSG Master Plan was the first plan to counter the years of the setbacks from the moratorium. Next was the BRT. FDA is a big magnet for bring bio-life to East County. Burtonsville Shopping Center is key to helping the East County. Areas of investment must be expanded.
- i. Shane asked about the challenges to build community and noted the differences between the West and East sides. December 17th is the Planning Board date of the Hillandale Gateway Plan. Shane requested the support of FOWO. Board opted to hear an update on Gateway at the next meeting and then vote to send a letter.
- j. Shana reiterated her concerns to make sure East County is emphasized in Thrive 2050. She hopes FOWO submits a letter of support. She asked about the cookie cutter approach and how we can insure this approach in terms of impartiality? Khalid said the plan attempts to mitigate the same look, uses and style we see now and tries to create distinctness in each community. Biking improvements are highly emphasized in the plan because it is extremely unsafe to bike on many roads now. Current trend is towards consolidation of public amenities while developments are getting larger which increases the need for automobile dependence. Khalid noted we will hear from opposition about destruction of single-family neighborhoods, etc. Investment and development needs infrastructure and it always lags. Roads and schools included.
- k. Elisse suggested a letter of support for Thrive 2050. Shana noted a need for a detailed letter. Motion to form opinions on the Thrive 2050 in a letter and discuss via email and Google Group. A letter to the Planning Board will be voted upon on December 8th.

4) From Pete

- a. Establish a Regular Meeting Schedule
 - i. Board chose the second Tuesday of each month; next meeting is December 8 2020.
- b. White Oak Science Gateway Advisory Committee is being formed by the County Executive. It will be very similar to the White Flint Downtown Advisory Committee.
- c. LATIP for Hillandale study is almost complete. DOT had several delays but hopes to release the plan this month. They will be discussing with The Duffie Company before releasing.

5) Police Update from Lt. Cole

- a. Drag racing – many around the state. Burtonsville, ICC, and Gaithersburg have been primary areas. Most recent event had between 400 and 500 participants appear and it was peaceful. Mo Co Police are coordinating with neighboring jurisdictions. The drag race organizers are

astute as events are posted on social media and then changed at last minute. Fatal collisions are an issue with 36 already this year. A lot of resources have been dedicated to the issue including several grant dollars. Five officers are assigned to the D3 for 2020 holiday period.

- b. Barry asked about loud racing on 29 and New Hampshire and how the community can report issues? Hard to address these random events because by the time the Police learn of it, the event is over. Having police everywhere is not possible. Loud exhaust/mufflers are cited for repair. County Police are working with Delegates in Annapolis on legislation so when vehicle inspections are performed, they include exhaust inspection. Police focus on areas based on incidents, so reporting them when they happen is important.
- c. Shana asked what has changed? Social media has contributed to the widespread notice given to the drag racing participants. Beltway, ICC, and 270 with all the access make it easy for participants to exit quickly.
- d. Shana recommended a conversation regarding traffic and pedestrian safety and improvements be on the January agenda with representation from county DOT and MCPD and SHA. Bruce also noted the increase in pedestrian fatalities.
- e. Lt. Cole had another comment posted in the chat section which he will address offline.

6) From the Board

- a. SSP Update
 - i. Rob gave an update. Exempt Opportunity Zones which has a positive impact on the East County. In the ECAB Meeting, the Planning Board Chair noted the East County was written off in the 1993 master plan. County Council must pass the SSP by Monday, November 16. Several worksessions have been held. Straw vote of 7-1 to approve the impact tax relief for Opportunity Zones. Pete noted that while the OZs may be exempt, the Viva White Oak project is not exempt from the General Development Agreement of 2018 and the obligations within the agreement for community improvements and infrastructure.
- b. Hillandale Gateway
 - i. Shane to give a presentation at the next meeting. Barry asked if the LATIP issues will be resolved by next meeting? Shane noted the development and LATIP are separate. Upcoming meeting with CE and Pete will touch on it.
- c. Incorporating FOWO
 - i. Dave noted Fatmata and Kim's guidance getting the process started. Articles of Incorporation have been drafted and are ready for approval. Motion needed to spend the funds of 1200.00 to incorporate. Rachael requested a timeline and Dave will inquire. Board will need to nominate new members. Shana requested clarification of two new groups. Pete gave a quick summary and promised to do an email with more details.
- d. Farmers' Market
 - i. Elisse and Dave gave an overview. Noted the tour of various locations for a new market. The best location was deemed the Dow Jones site on Route 29. Dave noted it is close to a BRT Station and bus stops. Bruce asked if Farm Fresh will do the market? Yes, from Dave.
- e. School Board Decisions
 - i. Shana gave an update. She sent an email to the Board. Recent CIP recommended that the two school's planned additions have been determined to be too expensive and as much as it would cost to build a new school.
- f. Route 29 BRT

- i. Not many people on the BRT. Causing some traffic delays. Shana asked if anyone from DOT is surveying riders. Pete will ask DOT. Pete also noted the New Hampshire Avenue BRT is in design stages and will begin in late FY22. Fence at Lockwood Transit Station? Pete to check on status.
- g. Board Assignments
 - i. Elisse and Dave are taking ownership of issues for the Board. Need to be a full item agenda for December 8 meeting.
- h. Creating a Google Group for FOWO
 - i. Shana would like to form the group. Any objections? All good.
- i. Daniel Koroma is interested in becoming a Board Member. Elisse and Pete gave background. Elisse moved, Rachael seconded – approved.

7) From the Public – Opportunity to Bring up a Topic Not on the Agenda

- a. There were no comments or questions.

8) Adjourn (8:30pm)

NOTE: The next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 8th. Topics will include Thrive 2050, Hillandale Gateway update, and Board Member Assignments.